



COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE



F ebruary 11, 2016



EVENT CALENDAR

February is Black History Month & National Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month.

2/16

Credible Messenger Mentoring Training, YSC, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

2/17

Credible Messenger Mentoring Training, NB, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

2/26-28

Reflections (Parents' Retreat), Massanetta Springs, 712 Massanetta Springs Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22801

2/29

MLK Achievement Center Grand Opening, 2101 MLK Jr. Avenue SE, 3 - 7 p.m.

3/3

Performance Oversight Hearing, 1350 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, 10 a.m.

Staff Appreciation Snapshot



YDR Nkosinath "Natty" MnCube - also a licensed massage therapist - giving fellow staff members a relaxing treat at YSC's Staff Appreciation Day on February 1

A Warm Welcome...

The snowfall was mild this week, but a flurry of employee on boarding took place! You may recognize some of these faces as you notice them in different areas of the agency. Please extend a warm DYRS welcome to all of our new employees! (*View Left*)

Mack McGhee, Superintendent, NB • Natalie Gillard, Program Manager, 450 H. Street • Freedom Dowdy, Mental Health Specialist, NB • Karen Waters, YDR • Mark Pierce, YDR • Marcus Page, YDR • Wayne Flournoy, YDR • Javon White, YDR • Marcus Brown, YDR • Clinton Murchison, YDR • Shannon Maynard, YDR • Rodney Henderson, YDR • Demar Morine, YDR • Donatus Duru, YDR

What Love Looks Like

The good news about Case Management sometimes gets lost in our constant effort to improve. But please acknowledge the positive efforts of members of our team below...

Social worker **Ms. Omolara Gyasi** took the initiative to advocate for a young man and place him in a situation to be successful, grow and learn. In speaking with the youth and with the Public Defender Service (PDS), it is apparent that it is Ms. Gyasi's advocacy that brought about a positive response in him.

Though only this young man can determine his ultimate path, Ms. Gyasi realized that his potential is endless and that with the right support and decision-making guidance, he could become a productive law-abiding citizen. She put together a success plan for him that is working and continues to support him through his ups and downs. We hope his future decision making is driven by knowing that DYRS cares, supports and encourages.

Social worker **Ms. Caroline Brown** represented the agency at a revocation hearing on February 9. Her presentation and performance of her duties at the both the hearing, and in her case management regarding the youth involved, earned high praise from the youth's mother, the panel members, and the Public Defender Service. All agreed that Ms. Brown's diligence and sincerity regarding the youth's success played a powerful role in the hearing.

We cannot give up on our young people when they make mistakes. Advocacy is difficult to dictate through a Policy and Procedures Manual. Often it is intuitive. You have to care. We cannot train staff to care – it is just something that you do. Ms. Gyasi and Ms. Brown demonstrated their care and commitment to the important work that we do. We thank them for demonstrating what "Love in Juvenile Justice" looks like.

Restorative Justice

You've probably heard the term "restorative justice" used lately, in terms of the path the agency is taking in treating our youth. Curious as to exactly what it means? Here's a little perspective...

CRIMINAL JUSTICE VS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

TWO DIFFERENT VIEWS

Crime is a violation of the law and the state.

Violations create guilt.

Justice requires the State to determine blame (guilt) and impose pain (punishment).

Central Focus: offenders getting what they deserve.

Crime is a violation of people and relationships.

Violations create obligations.

Justice involves victims, offenders and community members in an effort to repair the harm, to "put things right".

Central Focus: victim needs and repairing harm.

THREE DIFFERENT QUESTIONS

What laws have been broken?

Who did it?

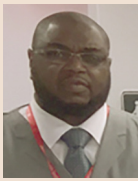
What do they deserve?

Who has been harmed?

What are their needs?

Whose obligations are these?

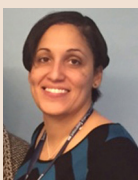
New Beginnings & Community Engagement



DYRS is excited to announce the onboarding of Mr. Mack McGhee, the new superintendent at New Beginnings. Mr. McGhee brings a wealth of experience to the agency, having worked in various capacities dedicated to the goal of empowering, encouraging and motivating youth and individuals to succeed — no matter their circumstance. Originally from Illinois, he served as the Deputy Director at Youth Outreach Services, Corrections Administrator for TASC, Inc./Illinois Department of Corrections Sheridan Program, Director of Training for Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center and Dean of Students for Urban Prep Academies for Young Men West Campus Chicago's Premier Charter School. He is also a nationally certified high school presenter for "Making It Count."



Consistent with new beginnings, Ms. Dana McDaniel will leave her position as Deputy Superintendent of the youth development center to assume a new role on the community side. Ms. McDaniel will lead the Credible Messenger Initiative, and provide support as the agency moves toward heightening community-based initiatives. Her insight and support played an instrumental part in the success of the inaugural Covenant of Peace events for our young men and women. Ms. McDaniel worked in several capacities serving at-risk youth for the past 17 years. Her passion and commitment are driven by her own personal and family tragedies as an at-risk youth, which motivates her to dedicate herself to the enrichment and guidance of the District of Columbia youth population.



As we continue to drive community engagement, we're thrilled that our peer from the community decided to join the DYRS team. Ms. Natalie Gillard has 15 years of experience working with youth and families directly and administratively, and will be working as a program manager with DC Youth-Link. Ms. Gillard believes in supporting and giving back to her community, providing a yearly scholarship stipend to those college students/families that have struggled financially to send their child to college. With a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education and MBA in Health Services, Ms. Gillard says "she is eager to continue to assist in youth and family success."

Raising Awareness

February is National Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month, and Youth Development Representatives (YDR) at the Youth Services Center (YSC) - in partnership with YSC staff - are presenting an educational program to address unhealthy relationship behaviors to promote healthier relationship. Since February 1, YDRs Kenneth Bridgers, Wali Farid, Charles McDaniel, Naquasha Moreland and Tamekia McMahon began spearheading lessons and activities to address the seriousness of teen relationship abuse. The group also administered surveys to expand their understanding of teen relationship abuse and violence, fact sheets and handouts. We applaud YDRs Bridgers, Farid, McDaniel and Moreland for using their education, skills, training, and experiences to create opportunities for Positive Youth Development. They're an inspiration to all.



February Fitness

The 2nd Annual Health & Wellness Fair

On Tuesday, February 9, DYRS held its 2nd annual Health and Wellness Fair at 450 H. Street, where vendors such as Rebel Fitness, Yoga Heights DC, Giant Foods and the YMCA presented information on fitness, nutrition and achieving health goals. The DYRS Health and Wellness Team had a display that showcased their array of medical services offered to both youth and staff. Employees also enjoyed healthy salads from Chopt, nourishing smoothies and even participated in culinary demonstrations with Achievement Center culinary instructor Chef Rock Harper. "I'm thrilled that our staff are showing an interest in living, longer healthier lives," said DYRS employee and event organizer Lanice Williams. "In our work, we have to lead by example."

Positive Youth Development

Walking the Right Path



On Tuesday February 3, youth that took part in "The Covenant of Peace" at New Beginnings received a surprise visit from their mentors. During the session, the mentors reminded the youth of the four pillars they agreed to adhere to - My Life Matters, The Act of Forgiveness, My Word Is My Bond, and My Family is My All - and reaffirmed the importance of turning their negative situations into positive ones. They then presented them with new sneakers as a symbol to walk the right path.

Striking a Chord



On Saturday February 6, residents and staff on the New Beginnings Transitions unit took part in an off grounds outing at AMF Bowling. The young men competed in a friendly bowling competition with DYRS staff and other youth at the bowling alley. The outing served to motivate our young people on the possibilities that await them if they continue to stay focused and engage in positive activities.

Group Orientations for Employment Opportunities

The Office of Workforce Development (WFD) is streamlining its processes to ensure the best possible service for DYRS youth, and is currently conducting group orientations for all youth interested in unsubsidized employment opportunities. Please refer youth interested in unsubsidized employment to a WFD team member for access to the Online Referral Form, and a team member will respond within 48 hours to schedule an appointment. The orientation process takes approximately two to three hours, and consists of registration form completion, CASAS Testing and career assessment and planning.



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Email Brenda Padavil at brenda.padavil@dc.gov with questions or submissions for future issues.

